arranged in 5 sections, with notes at the end of each section explaining the reasons for the correct answers. There is also a short well written, complete and up-to-date discussion of the particular topic covered in the questions. This section is ideal reading for anyone who has difficulty in coping with multiple choice questions and answers. There is a short but good section on basic respiratory physiology which will be useful for MRCP candidates as this is an area of thoracic medicine which often causes difficulty. The 'grey cases' are also carefully chosen with detailed answers and comments. At the end of each section there is a short reference list of the main subjects discussed for further study.

This respiratory revision book succeeds in covering a vast range of subjects. Although some repetition is inevitable in a text of this type, the author has kept this to a minimum by stressing different aspects of the topics on each occasion. I would recommend it as essential reading to all MRCP candidates and I am sure that anyone entering the field of thoracic medicine will also find this book useful.

J.A. Wedzicha
The London Hospital,
London E1 1BB.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases, edited by Yehudi M. Felman. Pp. xiv + 321, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1986. £55.00.

The sexually transmitted diseases are now a rapidly advancing major discipline of medicine. This book is a welcome addition to the large number of books that have appeared lately on this subject.

It is a pleasantly produced volume with attractive printing and lay out. The emphasis is on practical aspects but controversy is not avoided which adds to the interest of the book. Every chapter is followed by a good list of references up to 1983.

I particularly like the refreshing and lively way in which much of the subject matter is discussed. The chapters on non-gonococcal urethritis by Dr William Bowie and on the papilloma viruses by Dr David Oriel are particularly good examples. Appropriately, there is a whole chapter devoted to the very important subject of pelvic inflammatory disease. The proper investigation and treatment of the male partner – although mentioned briefly – deserves a much more detailed discussion. This is important since many of these men may be non-symptomatic carriers of the gonococcus and/or *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

The chapter on non-venereal disease of the genitals has to cover a wide brief and thus, by necessity, has to be concise. However, I think that patients who complain of pearly penile papules, and who are mostly worried teenagers, should be reassured that they are normal. There is a short, general review of Kaposi's sarcoma and this will undoubtedly be greatly amplified in the next edition.

There are black and white illustrations throughout the text, and there is also a good collection of colour plates. The photographs in plate 3.8 and 11.3 could be improved on in the next edition.

This is a pleasant, stimulating and very readable book. It

deserves to have a place in many general medical and most specialist departmental libraries.

W.A. Atia,
Royal Northern Hospital,
London N7 6LD.

Successful Private Practice: a Guide to Effective Medical Practice Management, Maxine Buchele and Susan Wynn-Williams. Pp. xviii + 238, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £20.00.

This book is excellently written and well laid out. It is however, written from the point of view of two practising physiotherapists, and a lot of the views contained within it are not applicable to consultant practice. There is no guidance as to the various regulations that affect most of us who work within the National Health Service hospitals and the private field, nor is there any advice as to exactly what constitutes private practice. Whereas I am certain the book would be of great benefit to physiotherapists and similar professions, I do not think it is appropriate for doctors, and I cannot recommend it.

J. Chawner
St David's Hospital,
Bangor,
Gwynedd LL57 4SL.

Venous Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism: Diagnostic Methods, edited by Jack Hirsh. *Methods in Hematology*. Vol. 18. Pp. v + 179, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1987. £30.00.

There is a clear and critical summary of the vast literature accumulated in the last few years about non-invasive techniques for diagnosing venous thrombosis and pulmonary embolism. Although the book follows the current fashion for multiple authors the whole topic is completely summarised in the two chapters written by the editor and his colleagues at McMasters University.

Venous thrombosis is a condition which many doctors in the United Kingdom will refuse to acknowledge as being either common or potentially dangerous. For instance, despite the large and consistent evidence to the contrary, there are many surgeons who are convinced that their patients never get deep venous thrombosis let alone pulmonary emboli. This seems the opposite of the situation described as thromboneurosis in the introduction to this book. Undoubtedly part of the problem, which this book tries to correct, is the difficulty of accurately diagnosing venous thrombosis. We are again reminded that clinical diagnosis based on the classical symptoms and signs is almost valueless, as in about half the cases there is in fact no thrombosis as judged by venography. The cause of the symptoms and signs in these patients is one of the mysteries of this subject; just possibly venography is not quite as pure a gold standard as it is generally believed to be. The various relatively non-

invasive techniques available as an alternative to venography are critically analysed in this book. Radioactive fibrinogen scanning may fail to detect thrombi in the upper leg, while impedance plethysmography may fail to detect calf thrombi and non-occlusive proximal thrombi. Doppler ultrasound is probably less accurate and blood tests are almost valueless for basing a decision in individual patients. There still remains the problem of diagnosing venous thrombosis or pulmonary embolism in patients who do not present with any of the classical symptoms or signs as it is almost certainly impractical to use any of the available systems for screening asymptomatic patients. The authors have correctly emphasized the danger of treating patients for venous thrombosis when its presence has not been confirmed. They

conclude that on the existing evidence it is safe to withhold treatment for venous thrombosis in patients with normal serial impedance plethysmography alone or with a single normal impedance plethysmography supported by a negative radioactive fibrinogen scan. Although probably all doctors in every speciality should be aware of the conclusions of this book, the detailed analysis would only be of interest to those with a special commitment to investigation, diagnosis, prophylaxis or treatment of pulmonary embolism and venous thrombosis.

J.A. Dormandy
*St James' Hospital,
London SW12 8HW.*

Books Received

Cope's Early Diagnosis of the Acute Abdomen, revised by William Silen. Pp. xii + 290, illustrated. Oxford University Press New York, Oxford, 1987. £12.50.

Doctors in Science and Society. Essays of a Clinical Scientist, Christopher C. Booth. Pp. xv + 318. British Medical Association, London, 1987. £14.95 (Abroad £19.50 USA \$30.00 including postage).

Journal of Psychophysiology, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1987. Pp. 97, illustrated. Oxford Journals. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987. £40 (UK) \$90 (US) £50 (rest of world).

Journal of Psychopharmacology, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1987 edited by Malcolm Lader. Pp. 54, illustrated. Oxford University Press, Oxford, £40 (sub rates for vol. 1-4 issues).

Multiple Sclerosis - Immunological Diagnostic and Therapeutic Aspects. Number 3. **Current Problems in Neurology**, edited by F Clifford Rose & Rosemary Jones. Pp. ix + 260, illustrated. John Libbey, London & Paris, 1987. £26.

Recent Advances in Urology/Andrology - 4, edited by W.F. Hendry. Pp. x + 345, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne & New York, 1987. £45.

Soviet Medical Reviews - Section B Physicochemical Aspects of Medicine-Reviews - volume 1, edited by Y.M. Lopukhin and N.I. Pirogov. Pp. viii + 426, illustrated. SMR Harwood Academic Publishers, Switzerland, England, France, USA, Australia, 1987 \$225.00.